Emphasis is also being given for closure of sparsely used unmanned level crossings suggesting their merger with another crossing/Road Over Bridge/Road Under Bridge in close proximity where the traffic can be easily diverted.

(d) Details of unmanned level crossing accidents on East Coast Railway during 2006-07 are as under:

Sl. No.	Date	Division	Block Section	Train No.	Brief Particulars	Casualty	Cause
1.	4.5.06	Sambalpur	Loisingha-Balangir	8005	While the train was on run one tractor dashed against the train	Killed-3	Negligence by road users
2.	5.7.06	Khurda Rd	Malatipat-ur-Puri	Rath Yatra Special	While the train was on run one Car dashed against the train	Killed-1 Injured-6	Negligence by road users
3.	25.11.06	Sambalpur	Mandirhar sud-Lakholi	8426	While the train was on run one Car dashed against the train	Killed-2	Negligence by road users

Election by secret ballot under supervision of department of labour

†1300. SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS:
SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether secret ballot for giving recognition to union is being conducted under supervision of the Department of labour as per order of Supreme Court;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether exemption has been sought from Court?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir. There are no such orders from Hon'ble Supreme Court.

(b) and (c) The Hon'ble High Court Madras and Hon'ble Supreme Court had directed to determine the exclusive membership of Railway employees for the recognition of unions through secret ballot on the pattern of Food Corporation of India election which were conducted under the supervision of Chief Labour Commissioner. However, while discussing modalities for holding of elections, a decision was taken by Ministry of Railways not to involve Ministry of Labour for supervision of conducting Secret Ballot. No exemption from Court was necessary.

Increasing the passenger amenities at stations

†1301. SHRI BHAGWATI SINGH:
SHRI BRIJ BHUSHAN TIWARI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) whether it is a fact that despite running special trains on festival occasions, passengers do not get seats and even space to stand;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that the old and the handicapped passengers have to face lot of inconvenience due to shortage of passenger facilities like wheel chair at new Delhi railway station of the Capital;

(c) if so, whether Government would make any action plan to enhance passenger facilities at all the railway stations including Delhi; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) During peak rush period the demand outstrips the availability of accommodation in popular trains.

(b) For the guidance and use of old/handicapped passengers at New Delhi station adequate wheel chairs have been provided and notice about their availability with the concerned officials has been displayed at conspicuous place.

(c) and (d) The Government has planned to provide the short term facilities at all stations including Delhi. Short term facilities are—(i) standard ramps for barrier free entry, (ii) earmarking parking lots for vehicles used by disabled persons, (iii) non-slippery walkway, (iv) signages, (v) toilets suitable for needs of handicapped persons, (vi) water taps suitable for needs of handicapped persons and (vii) "May I Help You" booths. Above facilities have already been provided at all "A-1" and "A" category stations. At remaining categories of stations, these facilities have been planned in phased manner.

Long term facilities comprise of (i) provision of facility for inter platform transfer and (ii) engraving on edges of platforms. These are planned after availability fo short term facilities.

Vacancy of guards in Railways

†1302. SHRI MOTILAL VORA:
SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of vacant posts of guards in different zones in Railways and since when these are vacant;

(b) whether it is a fact that incidents of loot, murder, etc. are happening off and on in trains due to lack of guards; and

(c) if so, the steps Government is taking to check these incidents and to ensue safe journey for travellers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The approximate vacant posts of Guards in different zonal railways as on 01.10.07 are:

Central Railway	190	Eastern Railway	338
East Central Railway	144	East Coast Railway	225
Northern Railway	342	North Central Railway	321
North Eastern Railway	073	Northeast Frontier Railway	161
North Western Railway	160	Southern Railway	104

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.